



News From

Maggie Brooks

Monroe County Executive

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BROOKS, MCC AND NTID OFFICIALS MARK START OF EMERGENCY COURSE FOR DEAF RESIDENTS

County Executive Maggie Brooks today joined with officials from Monroe Community College and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) at RIT to mark the start of an emergency preparedness training program designed for the deaf community. The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) course will be sign language interpreted, enabling 25 deaf or hard of hearing volunteers to participate in a program that prepares citizens to assist in the event of a community emergency.

"Our goal is to make emergency preparedness efforts accessible to everyone," said **Brooks**. *"This innovative program will allow us to extend the CERT program to deaf and hard of hearing residents, making the program more effective and more responsive to the broader community."*

The CERT program, which is free of charge, is offered through Monroe Community College's Homeland Security Management Institute in coordination with the Monroe County Office of Emergency Preparedness. Taught by trained emergency professionals, the eight-week program gives participants hands-on practical training in areas such as disaster preparedness, fire suppression, medical operations, light search and rescue and disaster psychology. More than 100 citizens have received CERT training since Brooks launched the program as part of Monroe County's Citizen Corps Initiative in June of this year.

Brooks praised the contributions of officials at NTID, who worked closely with the Monroe County Office of Emergency Preparedness and MCC's Homeland Security Management Institute to make the program accessible to the deaf community. *"This is another example of how community partnerships are making our community stronger,"* said **Brooks**. *"I am proud that we are leading the way by providing what may be the first course in the nation specifically geared to the deaf community."*

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The sign language interpreted CERT program will run weekly on Tuesday evenings from January 25 through March 8. Upon completion of the course, participants will receive a certificate and a CERT kit complete with safety equipment such as a helmet, goggles, flashlight, vest, and basic first aid supplies.

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